

March 23, 2009

Re: Statement of support for S.B. No. 605 (COMM) An act establishing Honor Our Heroes Day.

I request that Sept. 12<sup>th</sup> be a state holiday called Honor Our Heroes Day, to honor the men and women who serve our cities and towns on our police, fire and EMS depts..

My name is Robert Johnson. I am a resident of North Haven. I am a life member of VFW Post 9460 in Stratford where I lived when I entered the army as a young man. Each year I am the committee chairman for the town of Stratford's Annual 9-11 Memorial Service which is sponsored by our VFW.

Each year we invite members of the local police, fire and EMS departments to participate in our memorial service and to show them how much our town appreciates their service.

At this past years service I introduced something new to our program called "Meet a Real Heroe". It was a chance for the children to shake hands with a police officer, firefighter, or a first responder. I expected only the children to go up but to my surprise every one of the nearly 300 people who attended got in line and thanked our "everyday heroes".

I also introduced a petition to make 9-11 a national holiday. Support was overwhelming and we continue to collect signatures toward our goal.

I turned to Senator Len Fasano for help. He said he could assist me on the state level and would introduce a bill to make it a holiday in Connecticut. We could honor our heroes and set an example for the rest of the nation. Connecticut already has designated Sept. 11<sup>th</sup> as a "Day of Remembrance". Senator Fasano suggested Sept. 12<sup>th</sup> to celebrate our heroes because Sept. 11, 2001 brought out the hero in all of us.

I ask you for your support of this bill so that our communities will have an official day to acknowledge the brave men and women who put on a uniform each day to protect us and help us in our time of need. I leave you with this final thought. The next time you or I have an emergency the usual reaction goes like this. "Oh my god, somebody call 9-1-1 and when they do, a Hero is on his way".